1: Powdermaker E-5 (1929-1930) 1933 OM10 New Ireland OM10
Lesu

dancing in which both villages and other neighbouring ones participated. A year later Tagam gave a return feast to Lesu. Seiut's younger brother, Sagari, became the new chief for Tagam.

To-day, in each village the white Government appoints a man called "Luluai," who acts as an intermediary between the natives and Government officials. In some villages the "Luluai" is a man of outstanding personality, from the family of the former fighting chief, or an *orang* of his clan and a man of real influence in the village. In other villages the choice of a "Luluai" may not be so fortunate. But even when he is a man of influence and strong personality, it is still the important old men of the clan who are the real rulers of the community. The "Luluai," if he is only a middle-aged man, is guided by them on any matter of importance.

THE FAMILY

The smallest unit based on kinship is the family, which cuts directly across the moiety and clan, since the father, as has been previously stated, is always of a different clan and moiety from those of his wife and children. On some occasions, when the clan functions as a unit, this division is brought out very clearly, as at the wedding rites of a daughter, when the mother and her clan relatives are active and the father is in the background. But, as a whole, the ties of sentiment which develop in family life are not severed. For instance, although the rule for the inheritance of property as well as status is that it comes through the female line, the former frequently comes down through the male line. Inheritance of property and of status are in quite different categories. The rule concerning status is inviolable. A child is always a member of his mother's clan and moiety. But a child may receive magical spells from his father as well as from his mother's brother or mother. Although a native informant will always tell you that the latter is the

3: Chinnery G, E-5 (1929) 1931 OM10 New Ireland OM10

Notes on the Study of the Native Population of the East Coast of New Ireland.

114

From time to time during the past twenty years various writers in official and scientific publications have drawn attention to the depopulation that is alleged to be taking place in many parts of Melanesia, including the Territories of Papua and New Guinea governed by Australia—the former as an integral part of the Commonwealth, and the latter under Mandate from the League of Nations. The decline has been attributed to various reasons, and numerous methods for arresting it have been suggested. The authorities do not always agree as to the relative importance of the processes of destruction and restoration outlined for consideration, nor do they produce for examination any comprehensive statistical data on which conditions of the past can be compared with the position to-day. This is especially marked in the discussions on the Mandated Territory of New Guinea, which appear to have been based either on the tables of population appearing from time to time in the Annual Reports (both German and British), or on special investigations of a preliminary nature for which no reliable material has been available for comparing present results with the conditions that existed in past years.

648
659

We hear from persons of long residence, however, that the inhabitants of certain districts now number considerably less than they did in former times, and in some cases these statements are supported to a certain extent by the population tables, compiled from time to time by District Officers on patrol; in other cases so brought to notice, however, the population in some districts appears to be stationary, and in others to be definitely increasing. During the last two or three years most of the missions operating in the Territory have sent yearly returns of births and deaths to the Department of Native Affairs, and these have assisted the Administration to keep in touch with conditions in the areas concerned.

648

It is the expressed policy of the Government of New Guinea to do all things possible to further the moral and material welfare of the natives of the Territory, and for some years the departmental officials charged with the execution of this policy, e.g., the staff in Native Affairs, District Administration, Agriculture, Health, and other departments, have extended their organizations as widely as the means at their disposal would allow, to meet the ever increasing obligations undertaken by the

[p. 3] [p. 1 & 2 contain no text]

648 Government. Activities for the moral and material welfare of the native peoples embrace a wide range of administrative functions, such as the penetration, pacification and control of hostile districts, the institution of law and order, the establishment of schools, enumeration of the population, the inspection and protection of native labour, medical patrols, the mapping of morbidity areas, the training and appointment of native medical assistants, village hygiene, the establishment of hospitals for treatment, the training of natives in agriculture, the inspection of native plantations, and innumerable duties of a general nature. In this work the Government is assisted by the various missions in the Territory.

Among the problems of native welfare facing the executive organization of the Administration, the question of depopulation probably stands first. While so much is being done in a general way to cope with the variety of factors on which welfare is dependent and to eradicate the more readily ascertainable causes of diminution, the time is ripe for a definite and comprehensive attack on the whole problem. Our District Staff includes a number of young officers, who have had the advantage of an anthropological training in the Sydney University. They are stationed in outlying parts of the Territory as Patrol Officers, and, since their work keeps them constantly in intimate touch with the people of their divisions, a great deal of valuable information should be forthcoming.

648 659 Before launching a definite programme for the treatment of the population conditions, however, we must first determine whether depopulation is actually taking place, where and to what extent it is taking place, and, if possible, why it is taking place.

What is required, therefore, is a series of demographic surveys spread over the Territory for the purpose of ascertaining the conditions of the population, locating areas where depopulation exists, and gathering data showing its extent and the factors that are contributing to it. Possible experimental restoratives should then be considered before an expensive programme of treatment is actually laid down. Once the condition in any particular area can be set out statistically in terms of causal factors, the nature and possible extent of which can be indicated to the executive organizations whose duty it is to apply practical measures, the scheme of attack could be directed along definite lines of a social, economic, religious or physiological character, according to the requirements of the campaign.

121 464 With the object of devising a concise method suitable for investigations of this nature, I visited Kavieng district early this year, and, with the approval of His Honour the Administrator, made a survey among

the inhabitants of the east coast of New Ireland from Kavieng to Karu, a district for many reasons eminently suitable for the study in question. In the first place, it had always been, and still is, one of the most important centres in the Territory for the recruiting of native labour. Scattered along its coast are many of the most flourishing plantations in New Guinea, the owners of which depend on local natives for the bulk of their labour supply—a dependence specially marked just now owing to the depression in the copra market, which compels industrial organizations to observe the greatest economy. The immediate advantage to the planter of local labour over labour recruited from other parts of the Territory is the saving of recruiting fees, passage moneys, transport and incidental costs through his being able to secure the natives he requires from the villages around his plantation, and the advantages to the native population of being able to place its available workers on some plantation near their villages are obviously so great that everything should be done to encourage conditions that make it possible. A further inducement to the studying of the population in this region is the position that has lately arisen owing to an increasing European interest in local lands for agricultural purposes, resulting during the last few years in numerous applications for leaseholds, of which many were being held in abeyance until an inquiry could be made into the future land requirements of the native inhabitants. In German times considerable areas of land were alienated and freehold grants given to European planters, who utilized these rights to such advantage that here and there along the coast are numerous productive and exceedingly valuable coco-nut plantations. The land in the district is suitable for the cultivation of coco-nuts. It is traversed from end to end by a road good enough for motor traffic. It has a large population, the climate is excellent, and there are several anchorages in convenient centres where small steamers are able to pick up copra—the very conditions to encourage European settlement. Now arises a question which cannot be determined until a close survey has been made of the population itself; i.e., whether in the interests of the natives and their future requirements any further land should be alienated, a point of especial importance since the natives themselves now own coco-nut groves, which they are being encouraged to extend, while at the same time they are receiving instruction from officials of the Department of Agriculture in the planting and maintaining of such properties.

121 464

121 423 563 648

[491]

Just as in matters of land and labour, so in the question of trade, the natives are brought closely into contact with the European population. It is to the European that the native sells the products of his coco-nut groves, his surplus native food, pigs, fish, fruit, fowls, eggs and in some places trochas-shell, snail shell and bêche-de-mer, for which he receives in return money, rice and other European foods, and trade

439